

THE ADVISOR

A Publication of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

Spring 1995

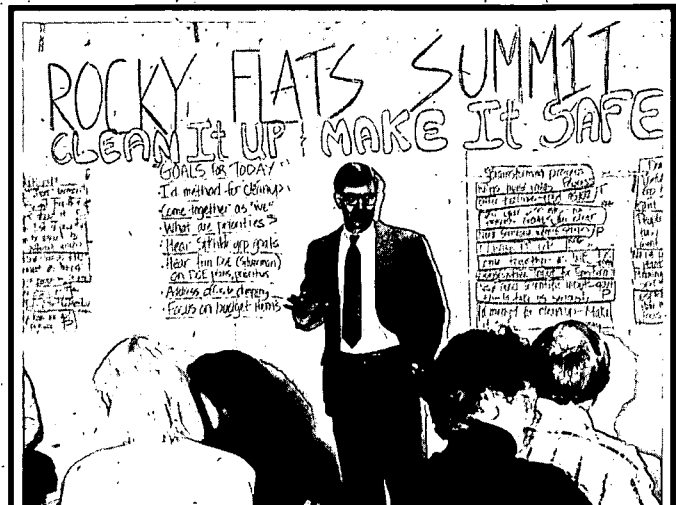
DOE Shifts Cleanup Dollars to Plutonium Activities

The Department of Energy (DOE) will defer certain cleanup projects in the Environmental Restoration (ER) Program in 1996 and reallocate the funds to address high risk problems at Rocky Flats. The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) will provide advice on the factors DOE should consider when identifying which programs to defer.

According to DOE, both of the regulatory agencies — the Environmental Protection Agency and the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment — have tentatively agreed that the

risk reduction activities associated with nuclear materials are more urgent than many of the planned ER Program activities and that funding of \$31 million should be shifted from the ER Program to accommodate this objective. This action also reflects the priorities

(continued on Page 7)



STORY INSIDE: Congressman David Skaggs encourages cooperation among the attendees of the Rocky Flats Summit in March.

CAB Opposes Permanent Waste Disposal at Solar Ponds

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board has made a consensus recommendation to the Department of Energy that it does not endorse a plan to permanently dispose of contaminated materials at Rocky Flats.

The area under discussion is known as the solar ponds, or Operable Unit 4. In the past, these ponds were used to evaporate process wastewater that contained varying amounts of hazardous and radioactive constituents. To remediate this area, the Department of

Energy (DOE) has proposed constructing an engineered barrier over the now-empty ponds which is designed to contain the contaminants for a minimum of a thousand years.

The Citizens Advisory Board's recommendation, developed at its April 6 meeting, stipulates that if DOE builds this cap over the solar ponds, it should consider this remedy only a temporary measure until a more suitable long-term storage location for the contaminated materials can be identified.

The Board also recommended extending the monitoring requirement for an indefinite period of time beyond the 30 years proposed by DOE. In addition, the Board advised DOE to develop both a comprehensive monitoring plan and a groundwater remediation design prior to beginning construction of the engineered cap. Finally, the Board emphasized that DOE should remain open to a better alternative proposal should one arise.

Highlights Inside:

Report on the Rocky Flats Summit	2
Results of CAB Survey	2
Meet the CAB Staff	3
New Contractor at Rocky Flats.....	3
ADMIN RECORD	

The Rocky Flats Budget Process	4-5
Liquid Stabilization	6
Citizens Advisory Board Members	7
Public Meeting Calendar	8

Story of the Summit: Common Priorities

Contributed by Jeanie Sedgely
Rocky Flats Local Impacts Initiative

To say it got off to a rocky start is an understatement. But to their credit, more than 100 people with diverse viewpoints and little trust in each other managed to find common ground at the first Rocky Flats Summit. There were steelworkers, CAB members, city council members, peace activists, environmentalists, regulators, salaried workers and state officials all in attendance. And by mid-afternoon on Saturday, literally all but one person in the entire group had come to agreement on the following eight priorities for Rocky Flats:

- *Make the plutonium safer.*
- *Reduce the highest risks.*
- *Reduce the mortgage (operation, security and maintenance costs).*
- *Recognize the magnitude and complexities of waste management.*
- *It's OK for ultimate cleanup of buildings and the environment to be slowed in order to focus on the three above if DOE commits to using the savings for these higher priorities and guarantees it will conduct the deferred cleanup activities later.*
- *We won't roll over for budget cuts.*
- *It's useful to review the rules, standards and procedures in light of the change in mission.*
- *Stakeholders must be involved and informed.*

It was an accomplishment. And not just because a list of priorities and action items was produced. It was an accomplishment because a diverse group of individuals with a long, adversarial history produced that list *together*. As DOE Manager Mark Silverman put it, they had "checked their guns at the door."

CAB Endorses Summit Priorities

Over half of the Citizens Advisory Board members attended and participated in this Summit. At its May 4 meeting, the Board endorsed by consensus the list of priorities that was produced at the Summit.



CAB members and other participants working on a list of priority activities for the cleanup of Rocky Flats.

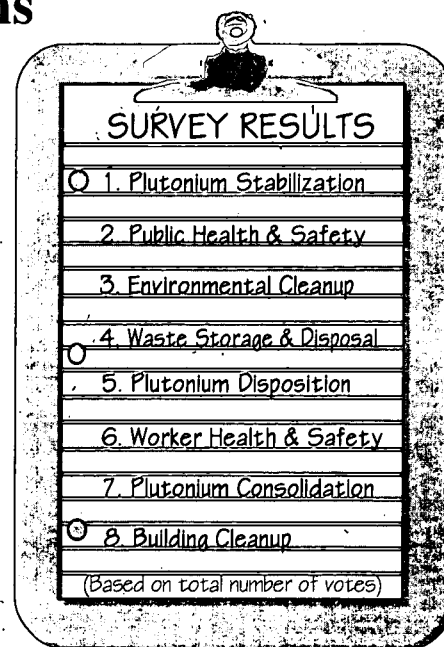
Plutonium and Safety Top List of Community Concerns

The last issue of *The Advisor* included a community survey for our readers to fill out. The results were used to help plan the Rocky Flats Summit, and they also reflect the priorities that came out of the Summit. Those who returned surveys primarily identified themselves as citizens, local/state government, Rocky Flats employees and environmental interests.*

When asked to list the three most important issues facing our community today, some listed specific Rocky Flats problems while others answered in the broader context of all community problems. Even among those who answered in a more global sense, Rocky Flats ranked fifth overall after growth, the environment, crime and pollution.

Plutonium stabilization and public health and safety received the most #1 votes as well as the most total votes when our readers were asked to rank the importance of issues at Rocky Flats. Environmental cleanup, waste storage and disposal, worker safety and plutonium disposition also ranked very high.

Based on the number of times it was mentioned, public health and safety also topped the list of guiding principles that should direct cleanup decisions at Rocky Flats. This was followed by: using risk estimates to pursue "worst first," the need



for honest and open communications and stakeholder involvement, environmental safety, "get on with it," take the time to plan and do it right, and use common sense.

One of the Citizens Advisory Board's goals is to bring the thoughts, opinions and concerns of the residents of surrounding communities into its discussions and recommendations regarding the cleanup of Rocky Flats. The input that was received from these surveys is being incorporated into the work of the Board.

*These results were not professionally interpreted.

Meet the Staff

In May and June of 1994, the Board approved the hiring of four full-time staff members. Many of you may already be familiar with each of them and know of their strong commitment to the success of the Board. As Project Administrator Lisa Hanson explains, "We are here to make the jobs of the volunteer Board members easier and more productive. We strive to supply them with all of the information they need, and provide the coordination and organization necessary for this Board to succeed. We are very excited to be a part of the Citizens Advisory Board organization, and look forward to great successes in carrying out its mission."

Lisa Hanson, Project Administrator. Lisa serves as the staff team leader, and works with the Site Wide Issues Committee. She is a former project manager at the Colorado Center for Environmental Management, where she worked on several public involvement planning and management programs, and facilitated stakeholder integration in decision-making at hazardous waste sites including a hardrock mine cleanup in southwestern Colorado. In addition, she organized the development of a citizens advisory group at the Savannah River DOE site. Lisa has a B.A. in speech communications and public relations from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and is currently completing her M.A. in the environmental policy and management program at the University of Denver.

Erin Rogers, Outreach Coordinator. Erin is responsible for the public involvement, outreach and education activities of the Board. She staffs both the Alternative Use Planning and Community Outreach committees. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a bachelors degree in international studies and political science, and holds a masters degree from the University of Denver in international studies - including a specialization in environmental policy analysis. Erin researched and wrote her M.A. thesis on environmental compliance at the U.S. nuclear weapons complex, with a focus on Rocky Flats.

Ken Korkia, Program Coordinator. Ken worked previously as the technical assistant for the Rocky Flats Cleanup Commission, where he was responsible for technical review and preparation of comments on documents, and representing the group at various committees and meetings. Ken also serves as a member of DOE's national Environmental Management Advisory Board. As program coordinator, his duties include compiling and disseminating technical information to be used by the Board in making its recommendations, and staffing both the Environmental/Waste Management and Plutonium and Special Nuclear Materials committees. Ken is a graduate of Creighton University in biology, and has completed some graduate work in public policy analysis at the University of Colorado at Denver.



From Left: Ken Korkia, Deb Thompson, Lisa Hanson, and Erin Rogers (sitting).

Deb Thompson, Office Manager.

Deb handles administrative functions for both Board and staff members. She also serves as staff person to the Executive and Membership committees. Deb has nearly 20 years experience in the administrative field, including five years in the executive offices of Governor Richard D. Lamm, and five years coordinating the Colorado FIRST Job Training Program for the state's Office of Business Development.

Kaiser-Hill Next in Line to Tackle Rocky Flats Challenges

On April 4, DOE announced that Kaiser-Hill, a partnership between CH2M Hill Companies, Ltd. and ICF Kaiser International, Inc., will take over the management of Rocky Flats. Kaiser-Hill will be operating according to a new type of DOE contract. Under this Performance Based Integrating Management contract, developed as part of the Energy Secretary's Contract Reform Initiative, 85% of the fees paid to Kaiser-Hill will be based on performance, while only 15% will be fixed. The five-year contract is worth an estimated \$3.5 billion.

As the integrating management contractor at Rocky Flats, Kaiser-Hill will oversee plutonium consolidation, environmental

restoration, safety, security and construction activities carried out by a number of subcontracting companies. Westinghouse Electric Corporation and Babcock & Wilcox Co. will be the primary subcontractors for nuclear materials handling. Morrison, Knudsen Corp. and BNFL, Inc. will handle environmental restoration and waste management. Wackenhut will remain as the security subcontractor, DynCorp will handle site operations, and Quanterra will provide laboratory services.

Kaiser-Hill is currently working with EG&G at the site during a transition phase. They will officially take over management of the site on July 1.

How Rocky Flats Gets Its Money:

Most people have had experience with a budget. Maybe you want to save for the down payment on a house. You sit down and make a list that includes your income and your monthly expenses. Next, you try to figure out how you can make adjustments in your spending patterns so that a tidy sum ends up going into your savings account. You have created a budget.

The federal government also creates a budget. Some might argue that they don't do a very good job considering the national debt, but still the government goes through an exercise known as the two-year budget process.

As part of the federal government, Rocky Flats is a participant in this two-year budget process. This year, the budget for Rocky Flats is \$816 million; \$603.6 is new money granted by Congress and \$212.4 is carryover, or money in last year's budget that was not spent so is "carried over" to this year. How does one go about planning

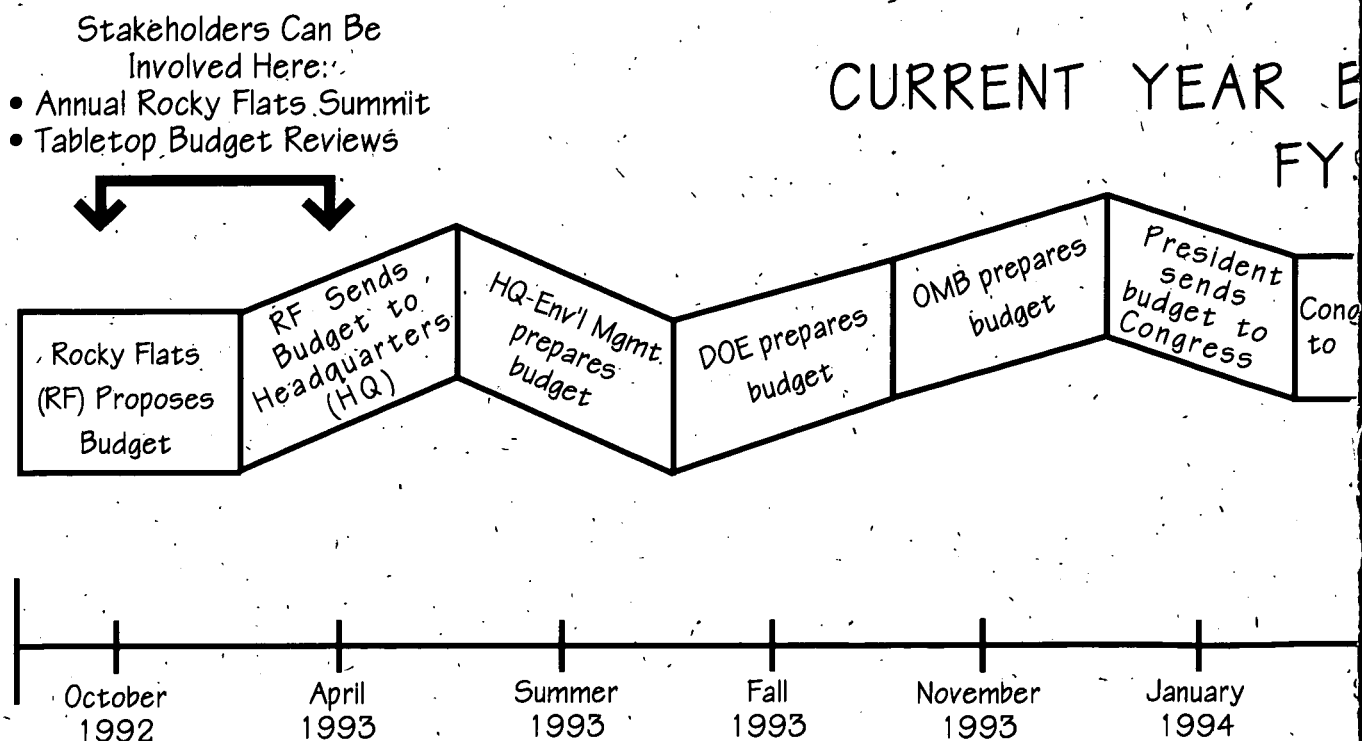
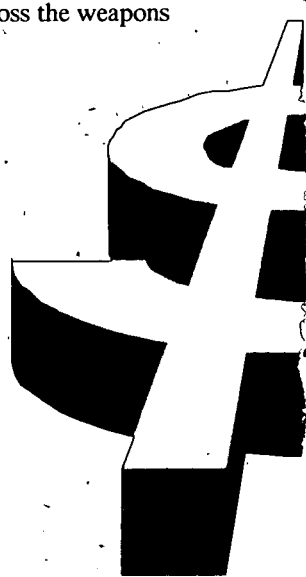
for and spending that much money? To answer that question, one must understand the two-year budget cycle.

The first thing to learn about the budget cycle is that the government operates on what is known as a fiscal year. A fiscal year is the period of time in which money is spent. The federal government begins its fiscal year on October 1 of each year and ends on September 30 of the next year. The current fiscal year began on October 1, 1994 and will end on September 30, 1995. In "budget talk," Rocky Flats is operating in fiscal year 1995, or "FY95" as it is commonly written.

Actual planning for FY95 began in October of 1992. At that time, Rocky Flats began preparing a list of priorities, the projects that it would need to do in FY95. To provide a sense of "reality" to this planning, DOE Headquarters issued a "target" level based on how much money was spent the previous year. In the early spring of 1993, Rocky Flats submitted its preliminary budget for FY95 to DOE Headquarters. The request was for \$652 million.

Since Rocky Flats operates under the jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, the budget request went to that office in DOE. The first step in the two-year budget cycle was complete.

The next step for the FY95 budget began with the Environmental Management office taking the proposed budgets from all the sites across the weapons complex and putting together one budget for the entire cleanup program nationwide. The cleanup program had a target level itself, so headquarters planners had to balance spending by taking money from one site's proposal to give it to another. Once the Environmental Management office completed its



The Federal Budget Process

budget, it then sent it to the office of the Secretary so that a budget for the entire Department of Energy could be prepared.

By September of 1993, the FY95 budget for the Department of Energy was sent to the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) whose responsibility it is to prepare the budget for the entire federal government. Once OMB finalized the budget, it became the President's budget that was forwarded to the Congress in January 1994. In Congress, numerous committees look at different parts of the budget. After months of hearings, Congress

made changes in the budget and voted for its approval in the summer of 1994. The budget that Congress approves for all the various parts of government is called an "appropriation."

After Congress approved the budget, DOE Headquarters received its "appropriation." This appropriation was not the same as the budget request that was originally sent to Congress, so DOE officials had to make some changes in their original plans. The bottom line for Rocky Flats was that its original request of \$652 million was lowered to its actual "allocation" of \$603.6 million. With a lesser amount, Rocky Flats then had to reprioritize its activities to match the amount of money it was to receive. On October 1, 1994, fiscal year 1995 began and the two-year budget cycle ended.

As one budget cycle ends, another begins. In October a new two-year budget cycle began with Rocky Flats starting to prepare its budget request for fiscal year 1997 that will begin on October 1, 1996. The Rocky Flats budget for FY96 that begins this

coming October is currently being reviewed by Congressional committees. By late summer, the budget should be approved and Rocky Flats will begin prioritizing on how to spend its allocation from headquarters.

Citizens Can Get Involved

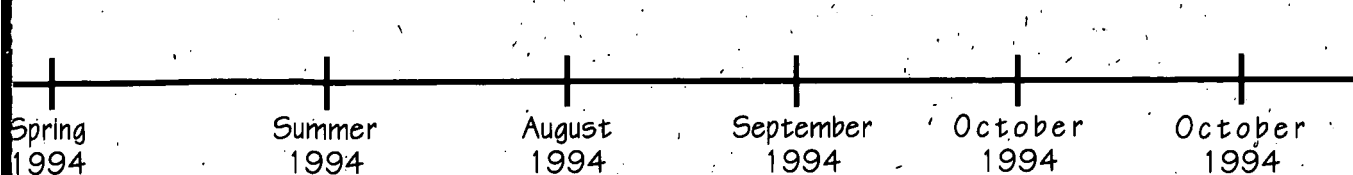
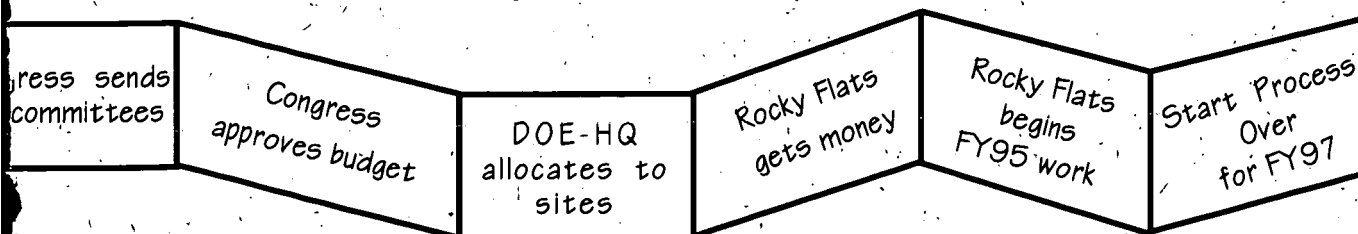
The Department of Energy would like to have more citizen involvement in the budget planning process. Much of the planning involves making decisions about priorities. Public input is necessary, especially in the current era of shrinking federal spending. The Rocky Flats Summit held this spring was an important first step in soliciting public sentiment concerning the priorities at Rocky Flats. The Citizens Advisory Board will continue to investigate opportunities for input into the budget planning and decision-making process at Rocky Flats. For more information or an update on what is happening to involve citizens in the budget process at Rocky Flats, please contact the CAB office.

BUDGET HISTORY:

95

Stakeholders Can Be Involved Here:

- Reprioritization based on actual allocation



Making It Safer: Stabilizing Plutonium Solutions

A theme heard repeatedly in the Rocky Flats community recently has been that, particularly in a time of shrinking federal budgets, the most dangerous problems at the site must be remedied first. The focus of the Rocky Flats Summit in March was to identify clear priorities for the site given the budget cuts. What emerged was an agreement that the most important task at Rocky Flats in the short term is stabilizing the plutonium which is currently in unsafe forms and packaging, such as solutions in plastic bottles. The origins of these problems date back many years.



Liquid stabilization will take place in gloveboxes such as this one in Building 771.

Abrupt End to Production

Many of the problems associated with plutonium solutions today can be traced to the sudden curtailment of weapons production in December of 1989 which left liquids and other materials sitting in containers that were not designed for long-term storage. Acidic solutions that had been used to recover plutonium and uranium from oxides, residues and other sources were left in place in bottles, tanks and piping in several buildings onsite. Some 30,000 liters (8000 gallons) of liquids, containing over 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of plutonium and uranium in various concentrations, have begun to degrade their storage containers and must be stabilized and repackaged to protect both the work force and the environment.

Dangerous Situation

In March 1994, Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary initiated a comprehensive study to identify and prioritize the environment, safety and health vulnerabilities that exist at DOE facilities due to storage of

plutonium in various forms. The results of this Plutonium Environmental, Safety and Health Vulnerability Assessment found two Rocky Flats buildings to be the most dangerous buildings relative to plutonium vulnerabilities in the DOE complex. Specifically, the assessment found that the three worst problems in terms of consequence and likelihood involve plutonium solutions in Buildings 771 and 371.

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, a congressionally mandated watchdog group of DOE, issued a recommendation in May of 1994 which outlined its strong concern that imminent hazards could arise within two to three years if certain problems were not corrected. Plutonium stabilization at Rocky Flats was identified as one of these serious problems.

Stabilization Processes

There are two types of processes proposed for stabilization of the liquids. One is to cement the relative low concentrated liquids into 55 gallon drums, and the other involves precipitating the plutonium out of the highest concentration solutions. The method by which the solutions will be stabilized depends on specific factors such as radionuclide concentration and presence of other hazardous constituents.

CAB Provides Early Input

In 1994, DOE worked with the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the stabilization of high concentration liquids. The CAB recommended that DOE prepare an EA as well as an Operational Readiness Review to make sure that stabilization activities could be restarted safely.

The draft EA was released in February 1995, and was available for

public review and comment through March. If DOE proceeds with the proposed actions after considering comments by the public and regulators, all of the liquids in Building 771 will be stabilized by December 1997 and the stabilization of solutions in Building 371 will be completed by June of 1999. The total estimated cost for the proposed activities is \$120 million.

The CAB Environmental/Waste Management committee receives updates on this project at its monthly meetings. If you would like information about this committee, please call Ken Korkia at 420-7855. For more information about liquid stabilization, call Gary Schuetz of DOE at 966-3016.

ROCKY FLATS PLUTONIUM SOLUTIONS

PLUTONIUM MASS	98 KILOGRAMS (215 POUNDS)
VOLUME	30,000 LITERS
NO. OF PLASTIC BOTTLES	431
NO. OF STEEL TANKS	17
LOCATIONS	BUILDINGS 371, 771, 779, 559, 776/777

Source: Plutonium Working Group Report on Environmental, Safety & Health Vulnerabilities Associated With DOE's Plutonium Storage



From Left: CAB Members Linda Murakami, Eugene DeMayo and Kathryn Johnson offer their votes at a recent board meeting.

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MARTIN HESTMARK, EPA
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The Advisor is published quarterly by the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). The Executive Editor is Linda Murakami. Please send your questions, suggestions and ideas to:

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DOE Shifts Funding (continued from Page 1)

expressed by stakeholders at the recent Rocky Flats Summit.

Joe Weinand, Director of Major Systems Acquisition Division for DOE said, "Since the well is dry - referring to DOE budgets - we had to look at other options. Due to the recent budget cuts, headquarters has been very receptive to moving funds between programs and Rocky Flats decided to try it out." Typically, this process of "unfencing the funds" has not been allowed. "Thankfully, headquarters and the regulators approve that this is the right thing to do," said Weinand.

The details have not been finalized, but DOE expects the ER money to be divided into four existing nuclear materials programs. Most of the money will go toward stabilizing plutonium-contaminated residues that are currently in an unsafe form or storage configuration. Transferred funding will also be used to expedite the consolidation of Special Nuclear Materials into one building, put plutonium in a form suitable for safe long-term storage and off-site shipment, and ship 3,600 cubic yards (30 semi-truck loads) of saltcrete to a commercial disposal facility in Utah.

DOE has submitted a proposal to the regulators and CAB outlining potential program cuts and the impacts. DOE proposes deferment of feasibility studies for Woman Creek, Walnut Creek and offsite areas, limiting the industrial area work to an interim measure which will ensure that adequate environmental monitoring occurs during decontamination and decommissioning, and other activities that, if deferred, will not pose additional threats to the environment or worker and public health and safety.

This preliminary DOE proposal does not reflect input from CAB. However, the Board has been requested to provide guidance by early Summer. *Contact Joe Weinand at 966-5926 for additional Rocky Flats budgetary information.*

CAB MISSION STATEMENT

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board, a nonpartisan, broadly representative, independent advisory board with concerns related to Rocky Flats activities, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations and advice to the agencies (Department of Energy, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency), government entities and other interested parties on policy and technical issues and decisions related to cleanup, waste management and associated activities. The Board is dedicated to public involvement, awareness and education on Rocky Flats issues.

Rocky Flats Public Meeting Calendar

June

1	Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
5	CAB Site Wide Issues Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
8	Future Site Use Working Group	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster Recreation Center
15	CAB Environmental/Waste Management Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
20	CAB Plutonium and SNM Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
21	RF Qtrly. Environmental Restoration Public Info. Mtg.	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Location To Be Determined
27	CAB Alternative Use Planning Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	CAB Office

July

6	Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
10	CAB Site Wide Issues Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
18	CAB Plutonium and SNM Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
20	CAB Environmental/Waste Management Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
25	CAB Alternative Use Planning Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	CAB Office

August

3	Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
7	CAB Site Wide Issues Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
15	CAB Plutonium and SNM Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
17	CAB Environmental/Waste Management Committee	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
22	CAB Alternative Use Planning Committee	6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	CAB Office

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE, PLEASE CALL BEFORE YOU GO: (303) 420-7855

*CAB also has a quarterly Community Outreach Committee meeting, please call for a schedule

*Rocky Flats' public meeting schedule for July & August has not yet been determined, please call for updated information

Westminster City Hall: 4800 W. 92nd Avenue

Westminster Recreation Center: 10455 Sheridan Blvd.

CAB Office: 9035 Wadsworth Pkwy. Suite 2250, Westminster

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